



Complex interventions - Exploring the application of behaviour change theory to doctoral supervisor training.

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Complex interventions - Exploring the application of behaviour change theory to doctoral supervisor training

Dr Sigrid Lipka, University of Derby
s.lipka@derby.ac.uk



Doctoral students' health, wellbeing and happiness

Context: Doctoral supervision affects student health, wellbeing and happiness (1).
Doctoral supervision is complex & consists of many specific behaviours (2,3,4,5).
To create desired supervisory behaviours, we need complex intervention = doctoral supervisor trainings (6).

Framework: Com-B model (7)

- ➡ identify **capabilities**, **opportunities** & **motivations** that underpin supervisor behaviours
- ➡ design research supervisor training programme
- ➡ develop criteria to measure & evaluate effectiveness of training programme

Aim: Explore application of COM-B framework to doctoral supervisor training



Michie et al. (2011)

Doctoral Supervisor Training

When: 3 afternoon sessions over 3 months

Who: Aimed at inexperienced doctoral supervisors;
Delivered by experienced research-active supervisors & guest speakers

What does it do: Increase confidence, motivation, key supervisory behaviours
covering the whole *supervisory journey*

How - Sources of learning:

Pedagogic & psychological research: doctoral pedagogy (3,4,5); biases in decision-making (8), Behaviour Change literature (7)

Regulations: local university, research councils, stakeholder interests;
“global research education market” (9)

Activities: lectures, role play, problem-based learning, reflection, observation, peer discussion

Supervisory journey
from deciding who to enrol, managing supervisory relationship, progress monitoring etc to post-viva dissemination & career support

Methods & Results

Questionnaires: Given to N=87 supervisors at end of training; 70% returned completed questionnaires.

Results: >> Majority of supervisors reported increase in their knowledge, capabilities and confidence as a result of training.
>> Minority asked for more exposure to actual supervisory practice.
>> Many supervisors highlighted exchange & discussion with colleagues from different subject areas / types of doctoral program as useful and motivational.

Take Home Messages

- ✓ **Behaviour change framework** provides a promising strategy for creating, implementing and evaluating doctoral supervisor trainings
- ✓ **Desired supervisory behaviours can** be created by improving staff **capabilities, confidence and motivation** through training
 - and by improving **opportunities**
- ✓ **Further research** is underway to test the long-term effects of supervisory training on supervisory behaviours **and** on the health, wellbeing and happiness of doctoral students.

REFERENCES – please email me for details: s.lipka@derby.ac.uk

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Pharrell Williams - Happy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6Sxv-sUYtM>

MSc Behaviour Change, University of Derby

<http://www.derby.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/behaviour-change-msc/>

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Dr Sigrid Lipka (SFHEA, PhD, MSc, Dipl-Psych)
Reader in Psychology
Programme Leader MSc Behaviour Change
Psychology/College of Life and Natural Sciences

T: 01332 593052

E: s.lipka@derby.ac.uk

ORCID ID [0000-0002-4685-1324](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4685-1324)

<http://www.derby.ac.uk/staff/sigrid-lipka/>

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